

A.L.I.V.E. Bible Study
Date: December 12, 2021
Advent Week 3

Isaiah 12:2-6, Zephaniah 3:14-20, Philippians 4:4-7, Luke 3:7-18

Theme: See

Once we have turned toward the fulfillment God intends,
we begin to be able to see the world and treat others in it in a new way.

Read Isaiah 12:2-6 and Zephaniah 3:14-20.

1. In the first 2 weeks, we have talked about the importance of watching (or being ready) and turning (or repenting to prepare the way for the Messiah to come and do his work). What is the tone and message of the texts in Isaiah and Zephaniah?
 - a. It is still that rough prophetic correction.
 - b. This is the message of hope!
 - c. These texts sound like a celebration of salvation...this was the part we wanted to talk about!
 - d. Why couldn't we have just skipped the first 2 weeks? This is the part that we want to hear about when we prepare for Christmas and, for that matter, every time we come to church.

Read Philippians 4:4-7.

2. This text is written to believers who have already chosen to be ready and turn from their sin. What is the message to us, if we are those people?
 - a. Regardless of our current circumstances, we have reason to rejoice and celebrate and praise God for what he has done.
 - b. The Lord is near! He is not far away from our situation like we often think.
 - c. We don't have to fear or worry or be anxious. We can bring all of our concerns to God!
 - d. God's nearness to us and his promises should give us peace no matter the circumstances.

Read Luke 3:7-18.

3. Wait, the tone just changed. Why is the tone different in verses 7-9 than the rest of the texts for this week?
 - a. The group that John is talking to at the beginning of this text are not the people who have recognized the imminent coming and prepared themselves, so proclaiming peace and rejoicing to them without repentance would be unfaithful to the message of salvation in Christ.
 - b. The people are coming out to see John, but they are "religious" rather than repentant.
 - c. John indicates that they are coming out to avoid consequences rather than to seek God.
4. According to verses 9-14, how might we be able to tell the difference between the religious and the repentant?
 - a. Well, verse 9 says "produce good fruit" or you are in danger of being cut down.
 - b. Well, when the crowd asked what they should do in verses 10-11, John tells them to give away their extra shirt to somebody who doesn't have one and to do the same with their food...
 - c. Well, John told the tax collectors in verses 12-13 to stop collecting more money than they are required to collect.
 - d. Well, John told the soldiers not to extort money or accuse people falsely, but to be content with their pay.
5. What do you suppose John would tell you that repentance looks like? _____